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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 ADDIS ABABA 003316

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [SU](#) [AU](#) [UK](#) [CH](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR: NOV. 16 SPECIAL ENVOY NATSIOS BILATERAL
CONSULTATIONS WITH P-5 ALLIES

Classified By: POLOFF ERIC WONG. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY. Separate November 16 bilateral consultations with UK Secretary of State for International Development Hilary Benn, French MFA Africa Director Jean de Gliniasty and Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Sudan Henri Benoit de Coignac, and Chinese PermRep to the UN Guangya Wang highlighted different P-5 approaches to the situation in Darfur and the UN SYG's proposed phased approach to UN assistance to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), despite the earlier adoption of UNSCR 1706. The UK largely supported USG redlines and provided a list of specific ceasefire, political process, and peacekeeping issues to UN SYG Annan, that helped form the basis of the outcome document adopted by an extraordinary meeting of senior representatives of the UN, AU, GOS, League of Arab States, P-5, and selected African countries. Sudanese President Bashir reportedly told French FM Douste-Blazy that he would only accept "African" forces; Bashir also appeared open to accepting a "supplement" to the DPA to gain its acceptance by non-signatories. France expressed concern that the UN's proposal did not call for monitors for the Chadian border. China, which had abstained on UNSCR 1706, proposed adopting a new UNSCR and stressed the need to "work creatively" with Sudan. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) Presidential Special Envoy for Sudan Natsios and AF/SE Andrew Steinfeld, accompanied by deputy pol-econ counselor (note-taker), conducted a series of bilateral consultations on Darfur, prior to the convening on November 16 of a special "high-level" meeting at African Union headquarters co-chaired by UN SYG Annan and AU Commission Chairperson Konare involving the P-5, Sudan, the League of Arab States, the European Union, and selected African countries (septel).

UK: FORCE GENERATION A CONCERN

13. (C) In a 45-minute meeting with visiting UK Secretary of State for International Development Hilary Benn, UK Special Representative on Darfur Christopher Prentice, UK FCO Head of Sudan Unit Jessica Irvine, Private Secretary to Secretary of State Hilary Benn Melanie Speight, and UK

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Ambassador to Ethiopia Bob Dewar, SE Natsios discussed the necessity of establishing UN command and control for the proposed hybrid UN-AU peacekeeping operation in Darfur, given

the institutional weakness of the African Union which rendered it susceptible to manipulation by the Government of Sudan (GOS). Natsios underscored the urgent need for effecting transition as soon as possible, expressing concern that the GOS sought to wait until January 2007, when current UN SYG Annan would end his tenure. The USG supported UNSCR 1706, and opposed calling for a new UNSCR. The USG was also considering imposing travel restrictions on 5 JEM leaders (although not on Abdel Wahid Mohamed el-Nur), to sanction recalcitrant non-signatories who continued to oppose the Darfur Peace Agreement.

¶4. (C) Asked whether the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) should simply be extended for another six months, Natsios said this would provide time for the GOS to continue conducting its racially motivated military campaign against civilians. Natsios noted that there was indisputable evidence that the GOS was arming Arab militia, in an attempt orchestrated by central government officials to win militarily by attacking the civilian population. Benn counseled that this be raised privately with GOS officials, but not in the larger plenary session to be chaired by UN SYG Annan and AU Commission Chairperson Konare. Benn shared the text of a list of issues he was providing to UN SYG Annan to serve as the basis of an outcome document, expressing the desire to reach agreement with the GOS on ceasefire, political process, and peacekeeping issues.

¶5. (C) Benn noted the need to look beyond Africa for potential troop contributing countries. African countries' inability to generate only one-and-a-half battalions in six months highlighted their lack of capacity. On the other hand, Rwandan President Kagame had said in the previous month that Rwanda could provide yet another battalion for Darfur, if there were better command and control. Egypt had proposed

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naming three separate force commanders: one for southern Sudan, another for Darfur, and an overall force commander. The UK would support deploying monitors on the Chad/Sudan border, as it would promote security, Benn said, adding that a UN assessment mission was underway.

FRANCE: NEED TO MONITOR CHAD/SUDAN BORDER

¶6. (C) SE Natsios began an hour-long meeting with visiting French MFA Africa Director Jean de Glinasty, French Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Sudan Henri Benoit de Coignac, and French Ambassador to Ethiopia Stephane Gompertz, by stating that the situation between Chad and Sudan was deteriorating. Having suffered three conventional military defeats since August, the GOS was now mobilizing Arab militias, as it had in 2004; three massacres had occurred in the last two weeks alone. GOS hard-liners believed the intent of a UN force was to protect IDP camps. Arab militia attacks on such camps had become more provocative, and over 700 villages had been destroyed; repatriation of IDPs remained a challenge.

¶7. (C) While France generally agreed on the phased approach being proposed by the UN SYG, de Glinasty said, France was concerned that Annan's paper focused on establishing a peacekeeping force to implement a political agreement, without enlarging the political agreement in question. The paper also failed to address the need to monitor the Chad/Central African Republic border, a French priority. Such monitors could be based in the CAR, as Bashir objected to UN peacekeepers on the Sudanese side of the border, de Glinasty noted. Finally, Annan's proposal did not address the "central" role the AU needed to play as an intermediary with the GOS, de Glinasty said. Natsios agreed on the importance of stabilizing the Chad/Sudan border, and noted that the United States sought a more comprehensive approach to Darfur, which included an effective mechanism to address

non-signatories who had been ejected earlier from the ceasefire commission. Following a political settlement, the USG was prepared to fund reconstruction and development, Natsios added.

READOUT OF FRENCH FM MEETING WITH BASHIR

18. (C) France assessed that Bashir was "sincere" in seeking a political agreement, but questioned his sincerity in accepting an African peacekeeping force, de Gliniasty said. He said that French FM Philippe Douste-Blazy had met in Khartoum with Bashir, GOS FM Lam Akol, and GOS intelligence chief Salah Abdallah Gosh. The GOS was "in a bitter mood" fearing a U.S. "hidden agenda," but had been happy with Natsios's October visit to Sudan, although unhappy with the visit of Hilary Benn. Bashir had complained that the international community had not rewarded Sudan for its efforts in acceding to the Darfur Peace Agreement, nor had it sanctioned DPA non-signatories. Seeking a peacekeeping solution to Darfur required strengthening the political process, de Gliniasty added. The GOS felt that UNSCR 1706 had been imposed on them, and now sought to participate in decisions on Darfur. De Coignac noted that Bashir appeared open to a "supplement" to the DPA, in order to grant concessions to non-signatories; flexibility was needed to bring JEM leader Khalil Ibrahim to negotiations, he added. De Coignac said Gosh acknowledged playing a role in encouraging factions to split, a tactic the GOS had pursued for two decades. Referring to U.S. plans to consider sanctions against JEM leaders other than Khalil Ibrahim, Natsios noted that the JEM sought regime change through the overthrow of the GOS; one needed to distinguish between the JEM and groups willing to negotiate in good faith. De Gliniasty remarked that Khalil Ibrahim was struggling for the autonomy of Darfur and, ultimately, secession.

19. (C) De Gliniasty reported that Egyptian President Mubarak had urged French FM Douste-Blazy to be "cautious" with Sudanese President Bashir: to listen to GOS concerns, rather than seek to impose a solution. According to Mubarak, the

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GOS did not seek a military solution but only sought revenge.

-- TCCs: Mubarak had cautioned the French not to refer to an "international force" for Darfur, and Bashir had said he would only accept Africans. Natsios observed that the GOS had previously agreed that the peacekeeping force in Darfur required another 10,000 troops; expanding the mission to include contingents from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh was desirable. Six weeks earlier, AMIS Force Commander Aprezi had stated he wanted troops on the ground, not UN officers under the "light" assistance package. Amb. Gompertz responded that the presence of non-Africans remained a sensitive issue for the AU, with foreign experts seconded to the AU Commission having to be based at foreign embassies rather than AU headquarters. African officers, serving under the UN, was an option, de Gliniasty said.

-- UN COMMAND AND CONTROL: In response to Natsios's discussion of necessity of having a single force commander, subject to UN command and control, de Gliniasty said FM Douste-Blazy had not raised command and control issues during meetings with the GOS. Acknowledging the weakness of AU forces, de Gliniasty said such a hybrid could be mandated under Chapter 8 of the UN Charter. France was now "wavering," he said, and could accept a "strategic cell crowned by UN officers," as used in Lebanon. Weak logistics lay at the heart of the ineffectiveness of AMIS, he added. AF/SE Steinfeld observed that the GOS preferred a weak peacekeeping force to an effective one, so as to allow the GOS to pacify Darfur.

-- UN FINANCING: De Gliniasty agreed that UN financing was "essential" for peacekeeping in Darfur, rather than ad hoc voluntary contributions.

¶10. (C) De Gliniasty cautioned against over-emphasizing UNSCR 1706, saying it was preferable to build up an effective force in Darfur pragmatically: "We need to reach compromise amongst ourselves," he said. Natsios noted that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement had been the result of Africa and the West having a unified position; by seeking separate negotiations with different actors, the GOS was seeking to divide and conquer Western allies. Noting China's support for Sudan, de Gliniasty explained that using the AU was "essential," as it was a means of bypassing Chinese resistance.

CHINA: SEEK A "CREATIVE" SOLUTION, POSSIBLY NEW UNSCR

¶11. (C) SE Natsios began a 30-minute meeting with visiting Chinese PermRep to the UN Amb. Guangya Wang by observing that attendance by FM Lam Akol rather than GOS Presidential Advisor Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail indicated that the GOS was not taking the November 16 high-level consultations seriously. Natsios underscored the urgency of achieving progress on Darfur prior to the end of the year, when UN SYG Annan would leave office. A ceasefire and border security were needed. As the Secretary would raise with Chinese FM Li, the United States and the UK were proposing a joint UN-AU successor to UN SRSG for Sudan Jan Pronk. As UN SYG Annan had stated that Africa would likely not be able to provide 10,000 additional troops, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh had to be considered as possible troop contributors; Egypt was also possible. Dual command and control posed a problem; a more effective solution was an African general reporting to UN DPKO.

¶12. (C) Amb. Wang responded that as UNSCR 1706 had become a political issue since adoption, parties "need to work creatively." He noted that China had abstained on UNSCR 1706, as some elements had been "difficult" for China. A new UNSCR in "the next few weeks," emphasizing Chapter 8 of the UN Charter (i.e., regional arrangements), could address using AU forces with UN assistance; without such a UNSC resolution, a resolution of the UN General Assembly would be required, Wang said. Natsios expressed the USG's preference for a UNSC Presidential Statement (PRST), rather than a new resolution, to clarify UNSCR 1706. Wang, in turn, observed that if the

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GOS and rebels were committed to the DPA, then there would be less concern about "modalities."

¶13. (C) Natsios noted that aerial photographs had shown that Arab militias had destroyed 700 villages in 2004. The USG believed that the GOS was supporting the resumption of such attacks by Arab militia, prompting concerns that negotiations were being used as a front for atrocities against civilians. Wang said he had told FM Lam Akol that Sudan needed to implement the DPA, that the GOS needed to meet its commitments without waiting for others. AF/SE Steinfeld observed that the GOS did not appear to be showing good will, as it was stalling implementation of the "light" UN assistance package, and opposed the "heavy" package. Wang observed that the United States and China were not at opposite ends, but shared a common objective of seeking peace for Darfur.

¶14. (C) COMMENT: During the subsequent high-level consultations chaired by UN SYG Annan and AU Commission Chairperson Konare, both China and the UK played an important role in rebutting objections to UN command and control posed by Sudanese FM Lam Akol. Hilary Benn observed that it was simply "unrealistic" to expect the international community to provide more than USD 1 billion to fund a proposed hybrid

operation, if it did not have any say in how the operation would be led. Chinese PermRep Wang, modestly noting that the UNSC had some experience in reviewing peacekeeping matters, underscored in the plenary session that the selection of a force commander was never a political issue, but always regarded as a technical matter left to the discretion of the UN Secretary-General. French interventions during the plenary predictably underscored the need to monitor the Sudan's borders with Chad and the Central African Republic. Of the P-5 members, Russia played an almost negligible role, with its ambassador to Ethiopia reading a brief prepared statement. END COMMENT.

[¶15.](#) (U) SE Andrew Natsios' staff cleared this message.
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